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April 20, 1992

PUBLIC NOTICE

Tri-Party Agreement

Washington State Department of Ecology, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy want your comments on a Hanford Cleanup Agreement document entitled, "Proposed Changes to Hanford Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order Milestones M-14-00 and M-24-00."

The document addresses proposed milestone or schedule changes to the Hanford Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order or Hanford Cleanup Agreement.

The 45-day public comment period for reviewing the milestone change document begins April 20 and ends June 3, 1992. The final documents are scheduled to be issued July 2, 1992.

Milestone 14-00--Low-Level Mixed Waste Laboratory:

The proposed change to Milestone 14-00 would allow USDOE to examine the possibility of using commercial laboratories to analyze the majority of Hanford cleanup samples rather than build a full-scale laboratory at Hanford.

According to the Hanford Cleanup Agreement, Milestone 14-00 directs USDOE to construct and operate a low-level radioactive mixed waste laboratory at Hanford by January of this year. In 1989, all three agencies believed this laboratory was essential to support the increasing sample load required by the Hanford Cleanup Agreement.

In November 1991, USDOE requested a change to Milestone 14-00 that would allow the department to use off-site commercial laboratories instead of building the full-scale laboratory at Hanford. EPA and Ecology were not convinced that USDOE could meet the laboratory turnaround times and cleanup schedules without the additional laboratory. Accordingly, the regulators denied the change request. Subsequently, the three agencies entered into a dispute resolution process to resolve the issue. The three agencies negotiated a proposed agreement to resolve the dispute. As a result, the regulators are not requiring USDOE to build the low-level laboratory at this time. However, USDOE must meet specific guidelines set for laboratory analysis turnaround times.

Under the proposed agreement, EPA has assessed USDOE a \$100,000 penalty for missing the January 1992 completion date for the laboratory. The penalty would be paid to the Superfund trust account in accordance with the Hanford Cleanup Agreement.

Also, USDOE agrees to build a smaller laboratory at Hanford. The smaller laboratory would be a quality assurance lab for sampling and analyzing wastewater streams.

The proposed change requires USDOE to prove--in one year--that laboratory needs at Hanford can be satisfied by using existing on-site laboratories combined with existing and new off-site commercial laboratory contracts. The proposed changes provide strict testing turnaround times; USDOE would be required to complete testing of low-level radioactive and mixed wastes within an average of 75 days from the time a sample is taken. In June 1993, EPA and Ecology would evaluate the effectiveness



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of USDOE's approach to laboratory services. The regulators would also make a final decision regarding the need to build a low-level mixed waste laboratory at Hanford or to provide additional laboratory capacity through the private sector in the Tri-Cities area.

Further details on the proposed dispute resolution settlement are provided as an attachment to the proposed change request.

Milestone 24-00--RCRA Groundwater Monitoring Wells:

According to the Hanford Cleanup Agreement, Milestone 24-00 directs USDOE to install 50 groundwater monitoring wells each year to meet the requirements of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). The wells monitor the contaminants in Hanford's groundwater. To date, Hanford operates 240 RCRA groundwater monitoring wells.

The three agencies are proposing a change to this requirement to read that USDOE install 30 groundwater monitoring wells in 1992. Then each successive year, USDOE would be required to install up to 50 wells per year.

The three agencies are proposing this change because they believe that after the 30 wells are completed this year, enough wells will be in place to adequately monitor the contaminants in Hanford's groundwater. This change has no effect on the monitoring wells that are being installed to support the past-practice investigations under Superfund.

Ecology, EPA and USDOE will conduct two public meetings regarding the proposed change request for the low-level mixed waste laboratory (M-14-00).

RICHLAND	7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 26 Tower Inn, 1515 George Washington Way
SEATTLE	7:00 - 9:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 27 Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza 6th and Seneca, Downtown Seattle

You can review the draft document at the following Public Information Repositories:

- U.S. Department of Energy-Richland Operation, Public Reading Room
Federal Building Room 157, 825 Jadwin Avenue, Richland
(509) 376-8583
- Suzzalo Library, Government Publications Room
University of Washington, Seattle
(206) 543-4664
- Crosby Library, Gonzaga University
Main Floor Reference area, E. 502 Boone, Spokane
(509) 328-4220
- Portland State University Library, Science and Engineering Floor,
Trojan and Hanford Collection, SW Park, Portland
(503) 464-4617

For further information, to submit written comments, or to receive a copy of the document, contact Mary Getchell, Department of Ecology, P.O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600, 1-800-321-2008.

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